DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 332 482 EC 300 347

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TITLE A Profile of Secondary SED Classrooms in Virginia: Curriculum Development and Instructional Procedures.
PUB DATE 4 Apr 91
NOTE 30p.; Paper presented at the Annual Convention of the Council for Exceptional Children (69th, Atlanta, GA, April 1-5, 1991).
PUB TYPE Reports - Research/Technical (143) -- Speeches/Conference Papers (150)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Accessibility (for Disabled); Computers; *Curriculum Development; *Emotional Disturbances; Grading; High Schools; *Instructional Materials; Peer Teaching; Special Classes; Special Education Teachers; Teacher Aides; *Teacher Education; Teaching Methods; Textbooks; Time Management; Volunteers
IDENTIFIERS *Virginia

ABSTRACT

A survey of curriculum and instructional practices in high school classrooms (N=151) in 82 school districts serving seriously emotionally disturbed (SED) and emotionally disturbed/learning disabled students in Virginia was conducted for the purpose of identifying the roles, responsibilities, and teaching skills for which SED teachers need to be prepared. The study looked at four major areas: curriculum development; instruction; instructional materials; and instructional support. Findings are reported for the following sub-categories: availability of a comprehensive curriculum plan for SED students; persons/groups responsible for curriculum planning; curriculum planning references; types of goals stated on Individualized Education Programs; subjects/content taught; percent of time devoted to each instructional activity; types of instruction; student engaged time and direct instruction time; grading systems; use of regular state-adopted textbooks; need to adapt regular textbooks; other instructional materials; paid teacher aides; adult volunteers/peer tutors; and regular access to computers. The survey resulted in 12 recommendations for teacher training including that prospective teachers of SED students should: learn how to design a comprehensive curriculum plan; be prepared to teach a structured social skills program; and become skilled in creating supplementary teacher-made materials. Appended are tables detailing findings and comments by respondents. Includes 14 references. (DB)

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ED332482

A Profile of Secondary SED Classrooms in Virginia: Curriculum Development and Instructional Procedures

by

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Presented at the 1991 CEC Convention
Division of Research (CEC-DR)
Atlanta, Georgia
April 4, 1991

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INTRODUCTION

In 1989-1990 I conducted a survey of curriculum and instructional practices in the secondary classrooms serving seriously emotionally disturbed students (SED) in Virginia. The scope of my investigation was broad. To explain the purpose, I must point out that I am primarily a teacher educator at Radford University in Virginia. The faculty teach full, twelve semester-hour loads, but also are expected to conduct research which will enhance instruction. In my case I wanted also to enhance my advising of graduate students in the Master's Degree Program in Special Education: Emotional Disturbance.

The purpose of the survey was to identify current public school realities and expectations regarding the roles, responsibilities, and teaching skills for which secondary SED teachers in Virginia need to be prepared. Secondary is defined as grades nine through twelve (9-12).

The study is divided into four major areas: curriculum development, instruction, instructional materials, and instructional support. The issues investigated were, for the most part, derived from questions, concerns, and interests expressed by my graduate students in emotional disturbance. They are as follows:

SED ISSUES INVESTIGATED

I. CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

- A. Availability of Comprehensive Curriculum Plans for SED
- B. Persons/Groups Responsible for Curriculum Planning
- C. Curriculum Planning References
- D. Types of Goals Stated on IEPs

II. INSTRUCTION

- A. Subjects/Content Taught
- B. Percent of Time Devoted to Each Instructional Activity
- C. Types of Instruction
- D. Student Engaged Time and Direct Instruction Time
- E. Grading Systems

III. INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

- A. Use of Regular State-adopted Textbooks
- B. Need to Adapt Regular Textbooks
- C. Other Instructional Materials

IV. INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT

- A. Paid Teacher Aides
- B. Adult Volunteers/Peer Tutors
- C. Regular Access to Computers

The study is primarily descriptive, the results of which are meant to be used to guide teaching and advising. Nevertheless, several distinct types of classrooms were identified on the survey, and responses from teachers representing each type were analyzed for differences. Chi-square tests and ANOVA were applied to check for significant differences between the SED and ED/LD categories, and between self-contained, resource, and combined classroom types. "Combined classrooms" are those in which respondents teach both self-contained and resource students. The level of significance was set at .05.

The categories and classroom types serving secondary SED students in Virginia, grades nine through twelve, are described more fully on Table 1. Included are the number of classrooms represented within each group, i.e., the number of teacher respondents.

TABLE 1
Classroom Organizational Types Serving Seriously
Emotionally Disturbed Students--Grades 9-12 (N = 151)

Category / Classroom Type	SED (Seriously Emotionally Disturbed)[1] n	ED/LD (Emotionally Disturbed/ Learning Disabled) n	Total N	%
Self-contained	29	3	32	21.2
Resource	13	28	41	27.2
Combined Self-contained and Resource Students	59	19	78	51.7
Total N	101	50	151	
Total %	66.9	33.1	100.0	

[1]Includes students classified as 'behaviorally disordered,' 'emotionally disturbed,' 'behaviorally maladjusted' (behavioral adjustment).

[2]Twelve (12) respondents fell in the "Other" category (learning resource, multicategorical, itinerant, and consultant/monitor), for a total of 163 usable questionnaires. They were included in certain global analyses but not in the analyses for significant differences.

DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

Teacher Population Surveyed. The teacher population (respondents) is eighty-two (82.2) percent female, eighty-one (81) percent white, with seventy five (75.4) percent with ages ranging from 25 to 45. Eighty-one (81) percent of the respondents are endorsed in ED, and fifty-two (52) percent hold a Master's Degree. Table 2 gives more complete details.

TABLE 2
Age, Sex, and Race/Ethnic Origin of Respondents (N = 163)

Age Ranges	Percent
21-25	11.7
26-35	42.3
36-45	33.1
46-55	11.7
56-65	.6
No response	.6
	100.0

Sex	Percent
Female	82.2
Male	16.6
No Response	1.2
	100.0

Race/Ethnic Origin	Percent
White	81.0
Black	16.0
Other (Hispanic, Oriental)	1.8
No Response	1.2
	100

Public School Participation. There are 134 public school districts in Virginia. All were invited to participate. Eight districts responding had no SED programs or teachers. One hundred sixty-three teachers (163) provided usable responses from eighty-two (82) districts. Thus, teachers from sixty-five (65) percent of school districts with SED programs participated in this study. Table 3 shows the breakdown of participants and non-participants.

TABLE 3
Participation and Non-participation of School Districts

N	Explanation
82	Participating Districts.
8	Have no SED Programs/Teachers.
4	Responded "No" -- teachers involved in too many other activities.
12	District gave permission and names, but teachers did not respond.
1	Large school district finally approved, but it was too late to gather data.
27	No response from school districts.
134	Total School Districts in Virginia

The size (total high school population) and location of the 82 participating public school districts in Virginia are shown on Table 4. The survey respondents are representative of all sizes and locations of Virginia school districts.

TABLE 4
Number and Percent of Respondents from School Districts
According to High School Population and Location

Size of School Districts (Total High School Population)	Number of Respondents	Valid Percent
500 or fewer	19	12.7
501 - 1000	23	15.3
1001 - 2000	40	26.7
2001 - 3000	12	8.0
3001 or greater	51	34.0
Missing Values	18	--
	163	

Location of School Districts	Number of Respondents	Valid Percent
Rural	62	41.3
Suburban	48	32.0
Urban	15	10.0
Small Town or City	25	16.0
Missing Values	13	--
	163	

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

I. CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT--SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

A. Availability of Comprehensive Curriculum Plan for SED

1. Twenty-six percent (26%) of respondents report that they have available a district- or school-wide curriculum plan for SED students. (N = 163) No significant differences were found.

B. Persons/Groups Responsible for Curriculum Planning (Table 5)

1. Eighty-six percent (86%) of respondents report that they, the SED or ED/LD teacher, have a major responsibility for curriculum planning for SED students. (N = 163) No significant differences were found.

2. An average of three persons or groups have some responsibility for curriculum planning, including the IEP Committee (33% of respondents), the special education supervisor (39% or respondents), and school administrators (22% of respondents). (N = 163)

C. Curriculum Planning References (Table 6)

1. Ninety-seven percent (97%) of respondents report that IEP Goals and Objectives are used as curriculum planning references. (N = 163)

2. Seventy-two percent (72%) of respondents report that they use the Virginia Standards of Learning Objectives (SOLs). (N = 163)

3. Respondents report that they utilize and average of three references for curriculum planning. (N = 163)

4. Only ten percent (10% of respondents report that they use district- or school-wide curriculum guides for SED. (N = 163)

5. ED/LD respondents are more likely to report using (.05) the SOLs as references than are SED teacher respondents. (N = 151)

6. SED respondents are more likely to report using (.05) District Curriculum Guides for SED than are ED/LD teaches. (N = 151) However, this finding cannot be considered either statistically or educationally relevant due to the small number (n = 1) of ED/LD respondents in this particular sample.

D. Types of Goals Stated on IEPs (Tables 7 and 8)

1. Ninety-seven percent (97%) of respondents state that they list academic goals on IEPs for SED students. (N = 163 for items 1-5)

2. Ninety-one percent (91%) list goals for behavior development.

3. Seventy-eight percent (78%) list goals for social skills development.

4. Fifty-eight percent (58%) list goals for affective/self-concept development.

5. Forty-six percent (46%) list goals for career/vocational development.

6. Significantly larger numbers of SED teachers (.05), as compared with ED/LD teachers, are likely to state that they include behavior, social skills, and affective/self-concept goals on IEPs for SED students. (N = 151)

Discussion.

Seventy four percent of respondents do not have comprehensive SED curriculum planning guides. Noel (1982), in Morgan and Jenson (1988), states that empirically validated, system-wide service plans for SED students are needed. Grosenick (1986), in Morgan and Jenson (1988), investigated SED programs and found that only about half had a written philosophy describing where, why, and how services were to be provided, or had a written set of guidelines describing the aims and purposes of SED programs.

The findings of the present investigation support the conclusions of Noel and Grosenick, with even a much smaller percent (26%) of teachers in the present study having access to a comprehensive service plan for SED students.

We see that the SED teachers themselves appear to have a major responsibility for overall SED curriculum planning. They use a variety of references to plan the curriculum for their students, but only ten percent seem to have available and actually utilize a comprehensive school-wide or district-wide curriculum planning guide.

Goals on IEPs for seriously emotionally disturbed students appear to be balanced in addressing the academic, social skills, and behavioral needs of these students. However, significantly fewer ED/LD teachers report that they include behavior, social skills, and affective/self-concept goals on IEPs for SED students.

It is possible that the general lack of availability of comprehensive curriculum guides may be a reason for the existence of such a variety of types of secondary SED classrooms and for the significant differences identified in programming--as in IEP goals, subjects taught, and time devoted to each area of instruction, as well as an apparent lack of uniformity in grading systems.

The state of affairs regarding the lack of district-wide, comprehensive service plans for SED students should be brought to the attention of SED preservice and inservice teachers; they should be trained to design and promote the adoption of comprehensive service plans.

II. INSTRUCTION--SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

A. Subjects/Content Taught (Tables 9 and 10)

1. The courses reported to be taught most frequently by more than 80% of respondents, are English, mathematics, and social skills. (N - 163 for items 1-4)

2. More than sixty percent (60%) of respondents report that they teach science, social studies, and organizational, study skills.

3. Reading and affective/self-concept development are reported taught by more than half of the respondents.

4. Fewer than six percent (6%) of respondents report that they teach physical education, psychomotor skills, and adjunctive therapies.

5. Significantly larger numbers of SED teachers (.05), compared with ED/LD teachers, are more likely to report that they teach mathematics, science, social studies, social skills, affective development, and vocational/career education. (N = 151)

6. Significantly fewer resource teachers (.05) are likely to report that they teach mathematics, science, and social studies, as compared with self-contained and combined classroom teacher respondents. (N = 151)

B. Percent of Time Devoted to Each Instructional Activity (Table 11)

1. Respondents report that they spend an average of fifty-five percent (55%) of their classroom time teaching academic subjects. (N = 163)

2. Other instructional activities range from an average of 7% to 15% each for the remaining instructional time. See Table 11 for specifics. (N = 163)

3. ED/LD teachers who teach vocational/career education are more likely to report that they spend significantly more time weekly (.05) teaching this subject than do SED teachers. (ED/LD = 19% of the time available as compared with 13%) (N = 89)

C. Types of Instruction

1. The majority of respondents (52%), report that they use a combination of individual and group instruction for teaching most subjects. (N = 163)

2. For many respondents who teach a variety of subjects, individual instruction predominates over group instruction. (N = 163)

   [Massive amounts of data were collected in response to this query. A detailed analysis will be made by this investigator in a future publication.]

D. Student Engaged Time and Direct Instruction Time

1. In an average fifty (50) minute class period, respondents report that students are actively engaged in learning for an average of thirty-nine (39) minutes. This is seventy-eight percent (78%) of the period. (N = 163)

2. Students receive an average of twenty-one (21) minutes of direct instruction during a fifty (50) minute period, i.e., forty-two percent (42%) of class time. (N = 163)

3. An average of eleven (11) minutes (22% of class period) are not accounted for. (N = 163)

4. ED/LD teachers are more likely to report a significantly greater proportion of student engaged time (.05) than are SED teachers. (N = 137)

E. Grading Systems

1. Eighteen percent (18%) of respondents report that they use a special notation or grading system on report cards. (N = 163) No significant differences were identified.

2. Respondents who do use special notations or grading systems describe numerous variations in response to open-ended comments regarding this item.

Discussion.

Certainly a wide variety of subjects are taught, especially English, mathematics, and social skills, in secondary classrooms for the seriously emotionally disturbed.

This survey did not specifically ask if the instruction was primarily tutorial, supportive with adaptations, or full teaching of the subjects; however, the assumption is that full responsibility for teaching the subject is the major delivery mode. This assumption is based on other survey items, i.e., methods of instruction, types of materials utilized, the need to adapt these materials, and grading systems.

The majority of respondents reported the inclusion of social skills training as a major element in their curriculum. This inclusion is essential. According to Morgan and Jenson (1988), social skills training should have a priority equal to academic instruction. Emphasis on academics is also essential in that academic proficiency competes with and reduces problem behavior; and academic skills are valued and reinforced in the mainstream.

Academic skills are taught during more than fifty-five percent of the instructional time. Use of the remaining instructional time varies. For example: ED/LD teachers who teach career and prevocational skills development teach the subject for significantly more time weekly than do SED teachers, while SED teachers use their remaining instructional time to teach behavior, social skills, and affective/self-concept development to a greater extent than do ED/LD students.

Approximately eleven (11) minutes of learning time per class period is not accounted for--over an hour each day. Perhaps this is the best that can be expected for any classroom, especially SED classrooms. However, continuing efforts should be made by teachers to reduce the amount of time lost within each class period.

Students, either individually or in groups, receive only twenty (20) minutes per period of direct instruction. (It is assumed that the students work alone the rest of the period, i.e. the remaining engaged time.) Since the amount of student learning is directly related to the amount of direct instruction received (Morgan and Jenson, 1988), efforts should be made to increase the amount of time devoted to direct (group) instruction in the SED classroom periods.

Future investigations should compare these results for SED classes, i.e. engaged time and direct instruction time, with similar data for regular classrooms.

Based on the data regarding grading systems, one might think that few future SED teachers need to be skilled in designing special grading systems. The question, however, is whether or not the standard academic grading systems are appropriate for SED students, and whether or not the standard grading systems reflect growth in the areas of improved behavior or social skills development. Further investigation is needed in this area.

III. INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS--SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

A. Use of Regular State-adopted Textbooks

1. Regular state-adopted textbooks are used for academic subjects by sixty-eight (68) percent of respondents, except for Reading (39%). (N = 163)

2. Significantly larger numbers (.05) of SED teachers who teach math and science utilize regular state-adopted textbooks than do ED/LD teacher respondents. (N = 151)

B. Need to Adapt Regular Textbooks

1. Eighty (80) percent of respondents report that they find it necessary to adapt the regular textbooks used. (N = 163) No significant differences were identified.

C. Other Instructional Materials

1. For all subjects taught, a wide variety of supplementary materials is also used, including special commercial materials and teacher-made materials. (N = 163)

2. Teacher-made materials predominate as the major type of supplementary material. (N = 163)

Discussion.

Sixty-eight (68) percent of respondents in this study utilize regular state-adopted textbooks for academic instruction, and most find it necessary to adapt and modify the texts in order to meet the needs of SED students. The majority of behaviorally disordered students are seriously delayed academically and will often require modifications in the teaching of basic skills and academic content areas (Morgan and Jenson, 1988). The majority of survey respondents appear to be appropriately addressing the need to modify instruction for SED students.

IV. INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT--SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

A. Paid Teacher Aides

1. Fifty-seven (57) percent of respondents have the services of paid teacher aides. (N = 163)

2. SED teachers have a significantly greater (.05) percent of aides than do ED/LD teachers. (N = 151)

3. Resource teachers in both the SED and ED/LD categories have significantly fewer (.05) paid aides than do teachers of self-contained or combination classrooms. (N = 151)

Discussion

The differences described above are to be expected, and may be explained by the *Regulations Governing Special Education Programs for Handicapped Children and Youth in Virginia* (1990), i.e., a classroom serving ten or more self-contained SED students will have a teacher aide.

B. Adult Volunteers/Peer Tutors

1. Eleven (11) percent of respondents report that they utilize the services of adult volunteers or peer tutors. (N = 151) No significant differences were found.

2. Respondents who do use this type of instructional support use, for the most part, peer tutors within the same special education classroom. (N = 151) No significant differences were found.

Discussion

Eighty-nine (89) percent of respondents report that they do not utilize the services of adult volunteers or peer tutors. Volunteer aides and peer tutors can be of great benefit to resource teachers (morgan and Jenson, 1933). Open-ended comments by respondents in this study bemoan the lack of time available to fulfill their numerous responsibilities. (See Appendix.) A greater utilization of adult volunteer aides and peer tutors could alleviate some of the programming restrictions related to the lack of time available for effective teaching.

C. Regular Access to Computers

1. Sixty-five (65) percent of respondents report having regular access to computers for instruction and reinforcement. (N = 151) No significant differences were found.

2. Significantly larger numbers (.05) of SED respondents than ED/LD respondents report that computers are housed in their classrooms. (N = 151)

Discussion

Computer accessibility, and utilization for instruction, practice, and reinforcement, is a common feature of public schools today (Lillie, et al, 1989; Lewis and Doorlag, 1991). The data from the present investigation indicate that well over half (65%) of the respondents utilize computers for instruction and reinforcement. SED teachers will have access to computers for educational purposes and will be expected to be skillful in this technology.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Rather then make formal recommendations as to issues which need further investigation, I am taking the liberty to phrase my recommendations in terms of the major purpose of this investigation: to collect information to enhance my teaching and the quality of my advising of graduate students majoring in Emotional Disturbance.

Here are some of my recommendation to students: First, I would have to caution students by quoting James Kauffman (1988), concerning the current status of program development and service delivery for SED students. Kauffman states that the current status can best be characterized as one of "confusion, disorder, diversity, inadequacy" (Morgan and Jenson, 1988, p. 33).

I would further recommend that students

1) know that fewer than a third of school districts surveyed have comprehensive curriculum plans for SED;

2) learn how to design a comprehensive curriculum plan for SED students and to promote adoption of such a plan;

3) become knowledgeable about available curriculum planning references;

4) be prepared to teach a large number of academic subjects at the high school level, especially English and mathematics;

5) be prepared to teach a structured social skills program, as well as affective and career/vocational development skills;

6) learn to organize and manage a classroom in order to maximize student engaged time and time for direct instruction;

7) be aware that most school districts use the same grading system for SED students as for regular students; you may want to study this issue and perhaps become a skilled advocate for adopting some type of modified grading system;

8) be aware that state-adopted textbooks are widely used by SED teachers in teaching academic subjects;

9) become skilled in adapting/modifying regular textbooks to meet the needs of SED students;

10) become skilled in creating supplementary teacher-made materials;

11) be aware that you may not have a teacher aide unless yours is a self-contained classroom;

12) know that adult volunteers and peer tutors are potential valuable resources; learn the skills for recruiting and training adult volunteers and peer tutors;

13) know that you will most likely have computers available for instruction, for drill and practice, and for reinforcement; become skilled in using computers to enhance your instruction;

14) and, finally, be aware that, once hired, you may be assigned to a self-contained classroom, resource classroom, or a combined classroom in which you might serve both resource and self-contained students. Your students may be classified SED or ED/LD. Be prepared.

APPENDIX

1. Tables 5 through 11
2. Comments by Respondents
3. References

TABLE 5
SED Curriculum Planning Groups (N = 163)

Individuals/Groups	M Percent of Use
SED Teacher	85.9%
IEP Committee	33.1%
Special Education Supervisor	38.7%
School Administrators	21.5%
School Board	9.8%
Other	9.2%

TABLE 6
Curriculum Planning References
and Percent of Respondents Utilizing Them (N = 163)

References	M Percent of Use
IEP Goals and Objectives	97.1%
Virginia Standards of Learning (SOLs)	71.8%*
Regular Education Curriculum Guides	39.3%
Generic Special Education Curriculum Guides	21.5%
District Curriculum Guides for SED	9.8%*
Other	11.0%

* Significance = .05

TABLE 7
Types of Annual Goals on IEPs
and Percent of Respondents Who List Them (N = 163)

Goals	M Percent of Use
Academic	96.9%
Behavior	90.8%*
Social Skills	77.9%*
Affective/Self Concept	57.7%*
Career/Vocational Development	46.0%
Other	8.0%

* Significance = .05

TABLE 8
Analysis of Differences in Annual IEP Goals between Categories

Goals	SED (n = 101)	ED/LD (n = 50)	Mean Percent (N = 151)
Behavior Development	94.1% * (95)	84.0% (42)	90.7% (137)
Social Skills	90.1% * (91)	58.0% (29)	79.5% (120)
Affective/ Self-Concept Development	72.3% * (73)	34.0% (17)	59.6% (90)

* Significance = .05

TABLE 9
Percent of Respondents Who Teach
in Various Subject Areas (N = 163)

Course/Subject Matter	Percent of Respondents Offering Subject
Mathematics	80.4*
Language Arts/English	85.9
Science	61.3*
Social Studies	64.4*
Reading	58.9
Physical Education	5.5
Psychomotor Skills	3.7
Social Skills	76.1*
Affective Development	49.7*
Organizational/Study Skills	62.6
Adjunctive Therapy	5.5
Vocational/Career Education	31.9*
Other	7.4

* Significance = .05

TABLE 10
Analysis of Differences in Subject Areas
Taught Between SED and ED/LD Respondents

Subject	SED (n = 101)	ED/LD (n = 50)	Mean Percent (N = 151)
Mathematics	86.1% * (87)	70.0% (35)	80.8% (122)
Science	71.3% * (72)	38.0% (19)	60.3% (91)
Social Studies	75.2% * (76)	46.0% (23)	65.6% (99)
Social Skills	86.1% * (87)	58.0% (29)	76.8% (116)
Affective Development	61.4% * (62)	28.0% (14)	50.3% (76)
Vocational/ Career Development	37.6% * (38)	20.0% (10)	31.8% (48)

* Significance = .05

TABLE 11
Average Percent of Time Weekly SED Students
Spend in Various Instructional Activities (N = 163)

Activity	Mean % of Time
Academic Skills	54.6
Behavior Development	14.9
Social Skills	12.3
Affective Development	8.9
Prevocational/Career Development	15.2*
Transitional/Procedural Activities	7.0
Organization/Study Skills	8.6
Other	12.4

*Significance = .05

SUMMARY OF OPEN-ENDED COMMENTS BY RESPONDENTS

MATERIALS AND TEXTBOOKS (15)

"We have no materials!"
Lack of appropriate materials.
Materials not age appropriate for secondary.
Regular textbooks are not appropriate but administrators want them.
We need better materials. Have to produce our own materials.
No money for materials, books, supplies. (R. plans to leave field for this reason.)
Too many workbooks used instead of adapting regular academic material by changing teaching modes.
We have to order material by category--core lists for ED or LD--we should be able to order according to individual student need.
Math materials--lack of word problems in lower level texts--has negative impact on results of standardized tests.
Long reading assignments in regular textbooks.
Difficulty of reading materials available, re: ability of students.
No textbooks or guidelines for teaching study skills for high school credit (teacher tutors students in study hall and gives credit for survival skills).

CLASSROOMS AND FACILITIES (6)

Inadequate classroom size; not enough equipment for appropriate self-contained activities.
Classroom isolated--long distance from assistance or restrooms.
No lab time for self-contained science.
Inadequate facilities for time-out or ISS. "ISS is a joke!" (The kids love it; It's in the center or everything.)

TIME (6)

Lack of planning time (planning, consulting, paperwork, cooperating with other agencies).
No time for "real services to ED"--academics are stressed more.
Too much paperwork--no time to teach.
No time for bathroom, planning, consulting, screening, testing, evaluation, and teaching too.

CLASS SIZE AND DISPARITY OF NEEDS (6)

Placing BD (conduct disorders) and SED students in the same classroom.
Small number or ED; must be integrated with LD.
Unable to do direct teaching (many students with different subjects and abilities).
Continually changing case loads--unable to monitor, share information, follow-up on those who leave.

RESEARCH NEEDS (4)

Math: a major problem area for SED. Math is logical; students not in a logical state of mind. "Does math ability improve when emotional needs are resolved?"
Post-graduate follow-up: what happens to SED students; are they successful?
Need to ask how programs teach appropriate behaviors--how to integrate "best practices in behavior management, not just behavior modification (inter-relationship of multiple educational goals, appropriate teacher responses based on student needs; timing; combining behavior modification and cognitive psychological approaches; trust building.

INFORMATION NEEDS (4)

What types of students are served in most schools? Do they include conduct disorders?
Are SED discipline practices the same as for the regular population?
Need detailed information as to referral sources and placement options in state (for young, emotionally abused).

STATE GUIDELINES (2)

Need greater agreement on characteristics and classification of SED.
Need better classification guidelines for SED and BD.

CURRICULUM CONTENT (3)

Social skills, study skills, prevocational need to be included (being added to our curriculum next year).
Need for vocational-technical education.
We have to make many modifications for "reteaching" subjects in Resource.

BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT (3)

Inadequate funding for expected behavior modification program; no personal funds for this and no time to solicit donations.

Ineffective administrative discipline support (administrators fear of "protective laws," kids know what they can get away with).

AIDES (3)

Lack of training/academic skills.

COOPERATION (3)

No input in decision-making, especially placement decisions.

Need more cooperation between regular and special educators.

COUNSELING (2)

Need counseling services.

We need a counseling background; counseling from outside sources not available.

MISCELLANEOUS CONCERNS (8)

BD kids not understood by regular teachers.

Need to develop guidelines for case management plans.

Too many students on homebound because of lack of money, personnel, services.

Lack of academic credit given for courses in SED classrooms.

No curriculum guidelines--teacher on his own.

The job is just to catch the student up on academics.

It seems to me that a missing element in the teacher preparation programs for teachers of ED students lies in the training of behavior management. Most colleges/universities teach the behavior modification approach using the point system and its variations. When a child is not helped with this approach, the teacher does not know what to do except recommend a private placement. Alternative methods should be taught because not all students respond to the point system.

Essentially our curriculum addresses educational deficits. The affective element is weak. I am glad that your study will be addressing this area.

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